

Request for Remote Public Input for House Select Committee on COVID-19 Public Comments Report - LINC

Date Submitted	Category	Name	Comments
05/12/2020 10:09 AM	Education Working Group	Scott Crew	<p>I would like to provide feedback regarding the recent school scheduling change from August 31 to August 17.</p> <p>As you know, many families (including ours) routinely schedule vacations for the last week of summer. In our case, we have already planned and paid for a vacation the week of August 24th. We now have to make the difficult decision of forfeiting \$2000 in non-refundable fees and payments or pulling our two children out the second week of school. I imagine that a lot of families are in the same boat as us. Cutting out two weeks of summer vacation will also have a very negative impact to the tourism industry which is already struggling. Another consideration is for summer camps, many of which are run by non-profits and employee teenagers and young adults, who will be relying on that extra two weeks of income.</p> <p>Although no one is sure what the next couple of months will entail, the move from August 31 to August 17 will interfere with vacations, tourism, employment and summer camps. This decision seemed to be short sighted with no consideration for the actual real-world effects. I strongly urge you to reconsider this change. I understand that there are concerns with getting children back into school as much as possible, however given that schools have been closed since mid-March an extra two weeks is not going to make any difference.</p>
05/12/2020 07:00 PM	Education Working Group	Masks at schools and coll Benita Powell	<p>Make sure students and employees are required to wear masks. This will prevent students and employees from getting the virus and sharing it with their vulnerable caregivers or families. Masks should not be an option. They should be required.</p>
05/12/2020 07:10 PM	Education Working Group	Funding for HBCUs/ Tribals Brenda Gwynn	<p>Ensure funding and start a task force for HBCUs/Tribal institutions that do not have funding to afford for students not to live on campus. They are in a hard place with a high percentage of employees who are in high risk populations. Telework may be the best option, but they would lose a lot of funding and students may not choose to attend because they can't live on campus. A task force for the state's HBCUs might be useful to help prevent the disease from spreading and continuing to decimate the brown citizens.</p>
05/13/2020 11:35 AM	Education Working Group	Jessica Trotman	<p>The data does not support a safe way to reopen schools this fall. Please support improved and expanded remote learning and socially distanced opportunities for limited interaction for students to have with the peers and their teachers.</p> <p>Ideally all students could stay home, but if not, then maybe students who are able to participate in remote learning should continue to do this in order to reduce the number of students in the classroom. I understand this may not be the most equitable solution, but undoubtedly all options must be on the table to find a create solution to support students progress.</p> <p>We're all in this together and need to protect our children and families. Reopening schools prematurely will only prolong this crisis.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p>

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05/13/2020 12:20 PM	Education Working Group	Ms. Pamela Criswell	<p>Jessica Trotman, MSEH Mother of two school-age children</p> <p>Hello, If we are to make preparations for school for the 2020-21 school year to be non-traditional (possibly having extended remote instruction), what plans are being made to insure that all children AND teachers have equitable access to technology to allow for intentional engagement by all parties? Also, will there be a mandate to offer programs to address social emotional (trauma) support prior to buildings being reopened for instruction? Thank you.</p>
05/14/2020 02:55 PM	Education Working Group	Jessica Graber	<p>As school districts prepare for the return of staff and students in the fall it is imperative that this committee considers not only de-densifying classrooms, or sanitizing surfaces, but also provision of financial resources for school districts to do assessments of existing facility infrastructure to ensure the building is performing in a manner that will reduce the spread of infectious aerosols. Facility assessments and necessary modifications can be made to prevent or slow the spread of COVID-19, Flu Virus and other viruses and bacteria as well as mold that cause illness and respiratory issues. There are modifications to HVAC Systems that can certainly slow the spread of infectious aerosols. Some measures do cost money, such as use of UV Light in HVAC systems. However, UV light, with proper dosage, can kill 90% of flu viruses and an even greater rate of success for COVID-19. There are many additional, less costly, system modifications than UV light that are also effective in slowing the spread of infectious diseases. The first step is to have the buildings assessed and recommendations made to create a healthier, safer learning and work environment. People can sanitize desks, door knobs, and floors 24/7 - but if the HVAC system and infrastructure is not assessed to ensure that a healthy amount of outside air is introduced or to ensure that humidity levels are where they should be or the pressure and air flow are optimal, then all the sanitizing will have minimal effect on creating a healthy building environment and preventing the spread of infectious aerosols like flu and COVID-19 viruses. There will never be zero risk for spreading viruses and bacteria, but the risk can certainly be minimized drastically if the system infrastructure is performing in a manner that adds to the defense against spread of infectious aerosols. Consider implementing standard operating procedures that include infrastructure assessment to ensure the HVAC systems and controls are doing everything they can do to help create a healthier, safer environment. Water quality is another focus area for assessment after buildings have sat unused for such a long period of time. The cost is time and some use of additional energy and water which is in opposition to many recent energy efficiency and sustainability measures; however, the cost of ignoring these factors will be much greater than the increased energy costs or water bills or the cost of time/resources to make the buildings safe.</p>